

Are you a discipline problem?

A discipline problem is “behavior that interferes with the teaching act, interferes with the rights of others to learn, is psychologically or physically unsafe, or destroys property.” (Levin and Nolan, 1996). Under this definition, not only can students be discipline problems, but teachers can sometimes be inadvertent discipline problems as well. To find out if you may be a discipline problem, take the following quiz. If you answer “no” to any of the bulleted questions below, you may be a discipline problem.

1. Do the behaviors I am trying to correct constitute a discipline problem?
 - Does the behavior interfere with my ability to teach effectively?
 - Does the behavior interfere with my students’ ability to learn?
 - Is the behavior psychologically or physically unsafe?
 - Does the behavior destroy property?
2. Do my behaviors maximize the time the students are spending on learning?
 - Do I start class on time?
 - Am I prepared for the day’s lesson (materials, equipment, in place and ready to go)?
 - Have I planned effectively for the full time (do I teach to the bell)?
 - Do I have back-up activities in case students finish early?
 - Do I have a plan in place for students who will struggle with the material?
3. Are my teaching strategies helping or interfering with student learning?
 - Is the lesson matched to the students’ cognitive developmental level?
 - Are my goals clear?
 - Am I clearly presenting the content?
 - Do I check for understanding throughout the lesson?
4. Have I created a classroom environment that is conducive to learning?
 - Do I have procedures and routines in place to ensure the smooth, orderly flow of class?
 - Is the classroom environment safe?
 - Is the classroom arranged to minimize distractions?
5. Are the strategies that I use to address discipline problems effective?
 - Are my expectations for behavior clear?
 - Are my consequences logical?
 - Are my consequences consistently applied?
 - Do I model the expected behavior or is my own behavior inconsistent with the behavior I expect from my students?
 - Are my verbal interventions as private as possible?
 - Do I address the person rather than situation or behavior?
 - Do I use sarcasm or otherwise belittle the student when addressing inappropriate behavior?
 - Are my verbal interventions brief?
 - Do I use threats rather than consequences?